

174 Four or five generations ago--it need have
131 been no farther removed in point of time--a
traveler entering the South Fork valley of the
Kern, in what is now east-central California,
would have seen throughout the length of this
narrow, mountain-rimmed valley small clusters of
domed willow and tule houses. In these houses,
or ranging in groups over the valley and foot-
hills, he would have been likely to encounter
certain brown-skinned people, who obviously knew
this region as their home.

131 Today white men's ranches dot this same val-
177 ley. Automobiles speed up and down its well-
signed highroad; cowboys riding beside restless
herds of range cattle, and shepherds trailing
slow-moving flocks of dun-colored sheep, trav-
erse its length. But the valley and the surround-
ing foothills still shelter the descendants, now
few in number, of those brown-skinned Mongoloids
who less than a century ago spoke a Shoshonean
language exclusively, and knew nothing of agri-
culture and herding, of metal products and writ-
ing.

121 During three successive summers it was my
123 privilege to visit this valley, and to work with
certain of the Tübatulabal Indians whose parents
or grandparents had inhabited it in pre-white
days. My purpose was to obtain as complete a
description as possible of the manner in which
the "old-timers" had lived out their lives in
this region. By direct observation, questioning,
obtaining genealogies and census lists, visiting
former hamlet sites, collecting botanical speci-
mens, gossiping, the aim was in part, at least,
attained. The former mode of life of the Tüba-
tulabal, in large measure existent today only in
the minds of certain elderly persons, appeared
upon consideration of its details to have been
extremely interesting, despite its structural
simplicity.

174 The Tübatulabal say that they have always
173 lived in the region where they are found today,
but, as Dr. Lowie has pointed out,¹ the absence
171 of migration myths is a characteristic of Sho-
173 shone mythology, to which Tübatulabal mythology
is fairly closely allied.² However, other evi-
dence, including the economic adaptation they
have made to their peculiar semidesert, semi-
Californian environment, indicates that the
Tübatulabal are by no means newcomers to their
area, although probably they originally entered
it from the desert regions to the east.

¹Lowie, 233.

²Gayton, 1935a.